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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MALIKI OBJECTS TO SOME UNAMI
MANDATE REVISIONS

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

11. (C) Summary: Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki explained his objections to the proposed text of the UNAMI mandate resolution in an August 6 meeting with the Ambassador. Maliki called for the addition of language guaranteeing that UNAMI could not act unilaterally without the prior approval of the Government of Iraq. He also requested deletion of language touching on disputed borders resolution and reintegration of armed groups. The Ambassador discussed ways that the PM's concerns could be addressed with alternative phrasing and word choices. The PM reiterated his request for a new Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) free of sectarian influences, and the Ambassador offered to facilitate a call between the Secretary General (SYG) and Maliki to discuss this issue. With regard to the \$25 million pledge for Iraqi refugees, the Prime Minister said Iraq would pay but said that it depended on identifying an acceptable disbursement mechanism, which he and the cabinet had not yet found.

UNAMI MANDATE

12. (C) The Ambassador thanked the Prime Minister for approving the MFA cover letter to the Secretary General, and explained that there is now a process of negotiation in the Security Council. "We understand your concerns, and we will work in New York to ensure that the resolution as adopted is acceptable to you," said the Ambassador. He urged the Prime Minister to authorize the Foreign Minister to deliver the letter.

13. (C) The Prime Minister stated that he had some amendments to the proposed UNAMI mandate. These amendments centered on making sure that UNAMI could not act unilaterally in Iraq without the prior approval of the Government of Iraq. For example, the Prime Minister objected to the word "mandate", because it raised echoes of the 1920s occupation. He also objected to the phrase "the people and Government of Iraq" which opened some of the sub-paragraphs in OP2 because it suggested that UNAMI could act unilaterally in support of "the people" even if the government objected. The Prime Minister also objected to the term "as requested by the Government of Iraq," which suggested that all the mandates had already been requested and therefore UNAMI could act unilaterally without further GOI approval. A discussion ensued about Arabic translations and synonyms, terms of art for the Security Council, and legal phrases used in United Nations negotiations. The Ambassador's reassurances that we were working in Iraq's best interests were offset by Maliki's suspicion that other parties were manipulating the UN against Iraq. "We are not worried about our friends, the U.S. or the

U.K., but of the Russians or French, who have other interests," said the Prime Minister, who then gave an example of Russian non-cooperation during the Sharm el-Sheikh conference.

14. (C) The Prime Minister objected to two substantive points: disputed border resolution and demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR). The Prime Minister said he did not want the UN coming in and opening discussions with armed groups or interfering with borders without a GOI invitation. "What are the 'armed groups' this refers to - will they talk to ex-fighters, ex-soldiers?" asked the PM. With respect to disputed boundaries, the PM felt that UNAMI should only get involved once the GOI has had a chance to try and resolve the issue internally, but that SRSG Qazi was trying to interfere. The Ambassador explained that we could find appropriate language to assuage these concerns, and pressed the point that while disputed border resolution was an important provision that many parties wanted to see included, UNAMI would not address the issue without a GOI invitation.

ENGAGING NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

15. (C) The Prime Minister wanted to eliminate the phrase "engage neighboring countries," which he interpreted as inviting them in to interfere with Iraqi internal affairs. "We don't want to 'engage' neighboring countries," he said, "we want to kick them out, lock the door, and throw the key into the sea." The Ambassador explained that "engage" meant to communicate, for example, that the border security working group in Damascus was "engagement".

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THE NEED FOR A NEW SRSG

16. (C) The Ambassador probed more broadly for the underlying concern with UNAMI, and the Prime Minister expressed frustration with his experience with Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) Ashraf Qazi. "We don't want someone like Qazi to come," he stated, "he did not deal with us neutrally." The PM then recounted his discussion with the Secretary General (SGY) on the margins of the Sharm El-Sheikh

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conference in which the SGY promised to designate someone new who would not be prejudiced. The Ambassador offered to facilitate a call between the Secretary General and the Prime Minister to discuss the new SRSG.

25 MILLION PLEDGE FOR REFUGEES

17. (C) The Ambassador then turned to the \$25 million pledge that had been made at the April UNHCR conference in Geneva, and pointed out that the total U.S. contribution in support of Iraqi refugee programs had risen to \$37 million. "We hope very much that now, four months later, you will make arrangements to disburse the funds," stated the Ambassador. The Prime Minister paused, and then said that the funds would be disbursed, but that the cabinet feels the proposed disbursement mechanisms will not let the refugees know where the money is coming from. The PM felt that he should ask the Ministry of Displacement and Migration to study the problem and recommend solutions. The Ambassador pressed that it has already been four months and the refugees need help now.

COMMENT

18. (C) During the discussions of the UNAMI mandate, Prime Minister Maliki clearly deferred to three advisors present: National Security Advisor Muwafuq Rubaie, Ambassador Sadiq Al-Rikabi, and CoR member Sami Al-Askari. The PM indicated that he trusted their advice on the resolution text, even though they were clearly less familiar with the workings of the United Nations or the Security Council than his own Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In many of the points debated, the Ambassador had to repeatedly correct the advisors' misinterpretations of legal language and misunderstanding of the United Nations.

19. (C) Post subsequently confirmed with the Foreign Minister that the signed letter had been delivered to the Iraqi UN mission, with the proviso that the letter be delivered only when the Iraqi delegation was assured that concerns raised by the PM had been adequately addressed. On August 7, Post communicated with the Foreign Minister via phone in Ankara (where he is accompanying the Prime Minister). An updated version of the text has been provided to the FM as an informal text, and he promised to discuss it with the Prime Minister and communicate instructions to their mission in New York.

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